

CERT IS 317 Course Glossary

Chemical attack. Deliberate release of a toxic gas, liquid, or solid that can poison people and the environment.

Combustible. Combustible liquids have a flashpoint at or above 100 degrees F. They are less hazardous than flammable liquids but still pose a risk.

Cribbing. The act of constructing a crib. A crib is a strong wooden framework that is built underneath a heavy object in order to support its weight. Box cribbing is an arrangement of alternating pairs of wood to form a stable rectangle. Cribbing also refers to the materials used to construct a crib, commonly blocks of wood or other sturdy materials.

Department of Transportation (DOT) placards. Placard system developed to identify hazardous materials in transit. Uses a combination of colors, symbols, and numbers.

Dust mask. The best type of dust mask is an N95, which will filter particles as small as 3 microns. Dust masks won't filter chemical or biological agents. If chemical or biological agents are suspected to be present, evacuate to an upwind location and notify first responders.

Emergency Alert System (EAS). A national public warning system that requires all TV and radio broadcasters to offer to the President the communications capability to address the American public during a national emergency. The system may also be used by state and local authorities to deliver important emergency information such as AMBER (missing children) alerts and emergency weather information targeted to a specific area.

Emergency operations plan (EOP). A plan developed by local professional response agencies that describes how a community will prepare for, respond to, and recover from an emergency or disaster.

Exothermic reaction. A reaction in which heat is given off.

Fire classification rating. A rating applied to a fire extinguisher to indicate which classification of fire it is capable of extinguishing. A fire is classified according to the type of fuel that it burns.

Flammable. Flammable liquids have a flash point below 100 degrees F. They are capable of being easily ignited and of burning quickly.

Gas shutoff valve(s). A valve used to shut off the flow of natural gas to a home. There may be multiple gas shutoff valves for appliances inside a house in addition to the main shutoff valve, which is typically located at the gas meter outside the house.

Hazardous materials. Materials that corrode other materials, explode or are easily ignited, react strongly with water, are unstable when exposed to heat or shock, or are toxic to humans, animals, or the environment.

Hazard mitigation. Process of identifying potential hazards in the home or workplace and taking the appropriate steps to remove or reduce them.

Head-to-toe assessment. Method of determining the extent of a victim's injuries.

Incident Commander (IC). First person to arrive at a disaster scene who should implement the Incident Command System (ICS).

Incident Command Post (ICP). Location at a disaster scene where the incident commander and immediate staff can meet to organize their response based on the Incident Command System (ICS).

Incident Command System (ICS). Used by professional responders to manage and respond to emergencies and disasters. CERT uses ICS for the same reason.

Leveraging. Using a lever and fulcrum to move a heavy object.

Mechanism of injury. The method by which a person has been injured. May indicate probable injuries.

Medical treatment area. Location to place victims while they wait for treatment.

National Fire Protection Association (NFPA). Authority on fire, electrical, and building safety. Advocate of fire prevention and an authoritative source on public safety. Issues more than 300 consensus codes and standards intended to minimize fire and other risks.

NFPA 704 Diamond. Developed by the NFPA to provide information about materials stored inside a given facility. Diamond is divided into quadrants with colors to provide information.

NOAA. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

Nuclear blast. Explosion that features intense light and heat, a damaging pressure wave, and widespread radioactive material that can contaminate air, water, and ground surfaces.

Personal protective equipment (PPE). Basic safety equipment that can include work gloves, goggles, filter mask, safety helmet, and sturdy shoes or boots

Radiological dispersal device (RDD). Also known as a “dirty bomb.” Contains radioactive material combined with a conventional explosive. A RDD is designed to affect a large area when released.

Radiological threat. Use of common explosives to spread radioactive materials over a targeted area.

Reactivity. The rate at which a chemical substance tends to undergo a chemical reaction.

Recovery position. Airway management technique for assisting people who are unconscious.

Shelter in place. Temporary situation to help survive contamination by taking immediate shelter in a location that can be sealed off.

Sizeup. Specific actions CERT members should take to determine if it is safe to act in a disaster situation. Can include assessing damage to buildings or injuries to victims. Goal is to determine how to do the greatest good for the greatest number of people

Triage. Process of sorting victims according to the severity of their condition.

Trauma. Serious or critical bodily injury or shock.

Traumatic stress. The emotional, cognitive, behavioral, physiological, and spiritual experience people have when they are exposed to or witness events that overwhelm their coping or problem-solving abilities.

Vicarious trauma. The emotional shift that can occur when responders interact closely with disaster victims.

Weapons of mass destruction (WMD). Hazardous materials that might include chemical and biological agents, radiological and nuclear materials, and explosives.